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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Patent No. 7,587,331  
Issued: September 8, 2009  
Application No. 10/615,157  
Filed: July 7, 2003  
Attorney Docket No. 10022579

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: DECISION ON REQUEST  
: FOR RECONSIDERATION OF  
: PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT  
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This is a decision on the "REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.705(d)" filed September 17, 2009, requesting that the patent term adjustment determination for the above-identified patent be changed from 1111 days to 1746 days.

The request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment is **DISMISSED**.

On September 8, 2009, the above-identified application matured into US Patent No. 7,587,331 with a patent term adjustment of 1111 days. This request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment was timely filed within two months of the issue date of the patent. See 37 CFR 1.705(d).

The Office acknowledges submission of the \$200.00 fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.18(e). No additional fees are required.

Patentees request recalculation of the patent term adjustment based on the decision in Wyeth v. Dudas, 580 F. Supp. 2d 138, 88 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1538 (D.D.C. 2008). Patentees assert that in view of the decision in Wyeth, they are entitled to a total patent term adjustment of 1746 days, which includes 1159 days due to exceeding three year pendency.

Patentees do not dispute that the total period of Office delay is the sum of the period of Three Years Delay (1159 days) and the period of Examination Delay (1192 days) to the extent that these periods of delay are not overlapping. However, in effect, patentees contend that 524 days of the Three Year Delay period overlaps with the examination delay. Accordingly, patentees submit that the total period of adjustment for Office delay is 1746 days, which includes the period of Three Year Delay (1159 days) and the period

of Examination Delay (1192 days), reduced by the period of overlap (524 days). As such, patentees assert entitlement to a patent term adjustment of 1746 days (1159 + 1192 reduced by 524 overlap – 81 (applicant delay)).

The Office contends that all 1159 days for over three year pendency overlap with the 1192 days accorded for Office delay during the pendency of the application, and thus, no additional days were entered for over three year delay. Patentees' calculation of the period of overlap is inconsistent with the Office's interpretation of this provision. 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) limits the adjustment of patent term, as follows:

to the extent that the periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in paragraph (1) overlap, the period of any adjustment granted under this subsection shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

Likewise, 35 CFR 1.703(f) provides that:

To the extent that periods of delay attributable to the grounds specified in § 1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted under this section shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

As explained in *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004), the Office interprets 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) as permitting either patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv), or patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), but not as permitting patent term adjustment under both 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv) and 154(b)(1)(B). Accordingly, the Office implements the overlap provision as follows:

If an application is entitled to an adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the period of delay under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay overlap under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). Thus, any days of delay for Office issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the filing date of the application, which overlap with the days of patent term adjustment accorded prior to the issuance of the patent will not result in any additional patent term adjustment. See 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), and 37 CFR § 1.703(f). See *Changes to Implement Patent Term Adjustment Under Twenty Year Term; Final Rule*, 65 Fed. Reg. 56366 (Sept. 18, 2000). See also *Revision of Patent Term Extension and Patent Term Adjustment Provisions; Final Rule*, 69 Fed. Reg. 21704 (April

22, 2004), 1282 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 100 (May 18, 2004). See also *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004).

As stated in the *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, the Office has consistently taken the position that if an application is entitled to an adjustment under the three-year pendency provision of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending before the Office (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay “overlap” under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A).

This interpretation is consistent with the statute. Taken together the statute and rule provide that to the extent that periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1) and in corresponding § 1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

As such, the period for over three-year pendency does not overlap only to the extent that the actual dates in the period beginning three years after the date on which the application was filed overlap with the actual dates in the periods for failure of the Office to take action within specified time frames. In other words, consideration of the overlap does not begin three years after the filing date of the application.

In this instance, the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay “overlap” under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) is the entire period during which the application was pending before the Office, July 7, 2003, to the date the patent issued on September 8, 2009. (There were no periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)). Prior to the issuance of the patent, 1192 days of patent term adjustment were accorded for the Office failing to respond within a specified time frame during the pendency of the application. All of the 1159 days for Office delay in issuing the patent overlap with the 1192 days of Office delay. During that time, the issuance of the patent was delayed by 1192 days, not 1192 + 1159 days. The Office experienced 1192 days of examination delay. Otherwise, the Office took all actions set forth in 37 CFR 1.702(a) within the prescribed time frames. Nonetheless, given the 1192 days of Office delay and the time allowed within the time frames for processing and examination and the 20 days of applicant delay, as of the date the patent issued, the application was pending three years and 1159 days. The Office did not delay 1192 days and then an additional 1159 days. Accordingly, 1192 days of patent term adjustment (not 1192 and 1159 days) was properly entered. The period of delay of 1159 days attributable to the delay in the issuance of the patent overlaps with the adjustment of 1192 days attributable to grounds specified in § 1.702(a)(1). Entry of

both periods is not warranted. 1192 days is determined to be the actual number of days that the issuance of the patent was delayed, considering the 1159 days over three years to the issuance of the patent.

Accordingly, at issuance, the Office properly entered 0 additional days of patent term adjustment for the Office taking in excess of three years to issue the patent.

In view thereof, no adjustment to the patent term will be made.

Telephone inquiries specific to this decision should be directed to Senior Petitions Attorney Patricia Faison-Ball at (571) 272-3212.

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